

Sacrifice and Temple

Bryan Lawrence (he/him/his)

Hi, my name is Bryan Lawrence, I use masculine pronouns, and today I am going to discuss the role of sacrifice and temple in First Century Judaism and in the Gospel of Matthew. I will begin by discussing the Ancient Israelite Sacrificial System, and then discuss the role that Temple plays as well.

Pentateuchal law prescribes the offering of specific materials such as cows, sheep, goats, pigeons, turtle doves, wheat, barley, wine, oil, and salt. Certain sacrifices were required for Jewish individuals to give on special occasions, such as feast or fast days. They did this to 'remove impurities' that they had accumulated. Animal and vegetable offerings were brought voluntarily by individuals in order to celebrate an event or to seal a vow.

Animal sacrifice can be grouped into four major categories. The first category is whole-burnt offerings and this is when offerings are flayed and burnt at the altar, the blood is dashed on the altar, and the hides belong to the priest. The picture at the bottom of the slide shows this type of offering. Well-being offerings are eaten by the individuals that make the offering after they set aside some of the offering for the priest and dash the blood of the offering across the altar. Purification offerings are brought by individuals with certain physical conditions, whether fortunate or unfortunate. They can also be brought by someone who broke a law. Lastly, reparation offerings were offerings that were brought as a result of certain transgressions, such as illegal use of holy material.

Moving on, an example of a whole-burnt offering can be seen in Genesis 22 with Abraham's offering of Isaac. He was intended as a whole-burnt offering. In terms of well-being offerings, communal meals can be seen as an example as well-being offerings, because these offerings are eaten communally. In Romans, 8.3 we can see that God has a sin offering by sending his own son to die. Lastly, Isaiah 53.10 suggests that Jesus was a reparation offering, but it is never explicitly stated.

The Herodian Temple is seen a lot because Mary, Joseph, Jesus, and his followers consistently visited the Temple, sometimes on a daily basis. Luke 19.47-48 says that "Everyday he was teaching at the temple. But the chief priests, the teachers of the law and

the leaders among the people were trying to kill him. Yet they could not find any way to do it, because all the people hung on his words.”

The narrative of the Last Supper caused a shift from animal sacrifice. Therefore, blood became wine and flesh became bread. This is significant because it becomes the Eucharist that so many individuals take. Thank you.

- Meshel, Naphtali. “Sacrifice and Temple.” Pages 658-662 in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, Amy-Jill Levine and Mark Zvi Brettler, editors. Second Edition. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018.